

**INMATE TREATMENT AND PRISON-TO-EMPLOYMENT PLAN
LEGISLATIVE REPORT
MARCH 2008**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) respectfully submits the following report that describes the Department's Inmate Treatment and Prison-to-Employment Plan. This report is required by Section 13 of Chapter 7, Statutes of 2007 (the Public Safety and Offender Rehabilitation Services Act of 2007, Assembly Bill [AB] 900, Solorio). Section 13 of AB 900 adds Penal Code (PC) Section 3105 concerning prison-to-employment and requires CDCR to develop an Inmate Treatment and Prison-to-Employment Plan. PC Section 3105 states:

The plan should evaluate and recommend changes to the Governor and the Legislature regarding current inmate education, treatment, and rehabilitation programs to determine whether the programs provide sufficient skills to inmates that will likely result in their successful employment in the community, and reduce their chances of returning to prison after release to parole.

Section 13 of AB 900 requires CDCR to submit three reports regarding development of the final plan. The Department is authorized by PC Section 3105 to use resources of other State or local agencies, academic institutions, and other research organizations as necessary in development of the plan. Two status reports were due on or before October 1, 2007 and January 15, 2008. The Department submitted these required reports dated September 28, 2007 and January 10, 2008.¹ The third report is a final plan due by April 1, 2008. This report presents the Department's final plan for inmate treatment and prison-to-employment.

In addition, AB 900 adds PC Section 2062 (Section 8 of AB 900) which requires CDCR to develop and implement a plan to obtain additional treatment and rehabilitation services for prison inmates and parolees. That plan requires CDCR to address specific infrastructure or capacity building areas necessary to increase treatment and rehabilitation services. The Department's report titled, Obtaining Additional Treatment and Rehabilitation Services, was submitted to the Legislature via letter dated March 11, 2008.² This report addresses CDCR's approach to increasing rehabilitation services for inmates and parolees. The contents of that report are closely related to the subject matter of this report; therefore, in order to eliminate duplication, this report concentrates primarily on the Department's Prison-to-Employment Plan.

The Prison-to-Employment Plan is concentrated in efforts to directly link inmate rehabilitation programs to the labor market and jobs in the community. Inmate education, treatment, and rehabilitation programs will provide skills to inmates that will likely result in their successful employment in the community and reduce their chances of returning to prison after release to parole. The prison-to-employment program will connect inmates to the labor market upon their release to parole. Completion of this plan is a performance condition under AB 900. Section 22 of AB 900 adds PC Section 7021 which specifies 13 conditions that must be met prior to release of Phase II revenue bond financing for prison construction. Condition 7 requires CDCR

¹ Letters to the Chair of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee regarding the status of the Inmate Treatment and Prison-to-Employment Plan dated September 28, 2007 and January 10, 2008.

² CDCR legislative report, Obtaining Additional Treatment and Rehabilitation Services submitted via letter dated March 11, 2008.

complete the Inmate Treatment and Prison-to-Employment Plan pursuant to Section 3105 prior to release of Phase II funding. Developing prison-to-employment programs and expanding educational and vocational programs for inmates are a high priority within the correctional system reforms envisioned under AB 900.³

The Department has received significant guidance from the Expert Panel on Adult Offender Recidivism Reduction Programming and the Governor's Rehabilitation Strike Team in the design of a correctional system using evidence-based principles and practices—in other words, what has proven effective through experience and practice in other states. A key component of effective correctional systems is the process of reentry and reintegration of offenders into their home communities. Moreover, it has been found that “Holding a job is one of the best predictors of parole success.”⁴ “The empirical and theoretical relationship between crime and unemployment is well documented. Among parolees, higher arrest rates are associated with both higher levels of job instability and lower levels of wages.”⁵ The importance of assisting ex-offenders to secure jobs cannot be understated.

Therefore, the Department is proposing to develop the New Start program, a focused prison-to-employment program, as part of its correctional system reform efforts. The New Start program will be modeled after what works in other states, particularly Project RIO (Re-Integration of Offenders), which has operated successfully in Texas for many years. The New Start program will be built around four basic components necessary to ensure stable employment for parolees: (1) in-prison vocational training; (2) in-prison employment skills and development of “employment passport” documentation; (3) post-prison employment placement services and follow along services; and (4) monitoring and evaluation of employment inputs and outputs.

In this document, the Department describes its approach to making the connection between in-prison inmate treatment and rehabilitation programs and getting and maintaining a job in the community upon release. The report addresses:

- Evaluation of current inmate education, treatment, and rehabilitation programs.
- The prison-to-employment program that will link inmates to employment upon release from prison and parole into their community.

This report will capture how complimentary activities, some of which are addressed in other required reports to the Legislature, fit within the overall framework and approach to providing rehabilitative programming and treatment services for prison inmates and parolees.

³ Senate Bill 81 (Section 33 of Chapter 175 of the Statutes of 2007) denotes these areas, along with several others, as the purposes for which the \$50 million appropriation in AB 900 for rehabilitative programming may be used.

⁴ Governor's Rehabilitation Strike Team final report, Meeting the Challenges of Rehabilitation in California's Prison and Parole System, dated December 2007 (page 13).

⁵ Ibid - references a study by Solomon, Johnson, Travis and McBride 2004 (page 59).

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A. INTRODUCTION

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) respectfully submits this report describing the Department's Inmate Treatment and Prison-to-Employment Plan. This report is required by Section 13 of Chapter 7, Statutes of 2007 (the Public Safety and Offender Rehabilitation Services Act of 2007, Assembly Bill [AB] 900, Solorio). Section 13 of AB 900 adds Penal Code (PC) Section 3105 concerning prison-to-employment and requires CDCR to develop an Inmate Treatment and Prison-to-Employment Plan. PC Section 3105 states:

The plan should evaluate and recommend changes to the Governor and the Legislature regarding current inmate education, treatment, and rehabilitation programs to determine whether the programs provide sufficient skills to inmates that will likely result in their successful employment in the community, and reduce their chances of returning to prison after release to parole.

Section 13 of AB 900 requires CDCR to submit three reports regarding development of the final plan. The Department is authorized by PC Section 3105 to use resources of other state or local agencies, academic institutions, and other research organizations as necessary in development of the plan. Two status reports were due on or before October 1, 2007 and January 15, 2008. The Department submitted these required reports dated September 28, 2007 and January 10, 2008.⁶ The third report is a final plan due by April 1, 2008. This report presents the Department's final plan for inmate treatment and prison-to-employment.

Other CDCR reports recently submitted to the Legislature capture other as well as similar aspects of treatment and rehabilitation for inmates and paroles.⁷ In particular, the report titled, Obtaining Additional Treatment and Rehabilitative Services, addresses the Department's overall framework and approach to providing rehabilitative and treatment services for prison inmates and parolees. That report requires CDCR to address specific infrastructure or capacity building areas necessary to increase treatment and rehabilitation services. The report also covers: the master plan for rehabilitative programming; infrastructure development and support; increasing specific rehabilitative programs; the new approach to delivering rehabilitative and treatment services (making operational the Expert Panel's California Logic Model); and obtaining additional rehabilitative programming for offenders in the correctional system, including prisons, secure community reentry facilities, and communities while on and after parole. The contents of

⁶ Letters to the Chair of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee regarding the status of the Inmate Treatment and Prison-to-Employment Plan dated September 28, 2007 and January 10, 2008.

⁷ CDCR legislative report, Obtaining Additional Treatment and Rehabilitation Services submitted via letter dated March 11, 2008 (AB 900, Section 8, which adds PC Section 2062); Expenditure of Assembly Bill 900 Rehabilitation Funding submitted via letter dated March 11, 2008 (Supplemental Report of the 2007 Budget Act, Item 5225-001-0001-CDCR [Item 1, page 31]); and, two separate letters to the Chair of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee regarding the status of the Inmate Treatment and Prison-to-Employment Plan dated September 28, 2007 and January 10, 2008 (AB 900, Section 13, which adds PC Section 3105).

that plan together with the other reports are similar or closely related to the subject matter of this report. Therefore, in order to eliminate duplication, this report will supplement those reports by focusing primarily on the Department's Prison-to-Employment Plan.

The Prison-to-Employment Plan is focused on efforts to directly link improved inmate rehabilitation programs to the labor market and jobs in the community. Inmate education, treatment, and rehabilitation programs will provide skills to inmates that will likely result in their successful employment in the community and reduce their chances of returning to prison after release to parole. The Prison-to-Employment Program will connect inmates to the labor market upon their release to parole. Completion of this plan is a performance condition under AB 900. Section 22 of AB 900 adds PC Section 7021 which specifies 13 conditions that must be met prior to release of Phase II revenue bond financing for prison construction. Condition 7 requires CDCR complete the Inmate Treatment and Prison-to-Employment Plan pursuant to Section 3105 prior to release of Phase II funding.

In addition, it is noted Senate Bill (SB) 81 (Section 33 of Chapter 175 of the Statutes of 2007) clarifies the purposes for which the \$50 million appropriated by AB 900 may be used. AB 900 appropriates \$50 million to CDCR to supplement funds for rehabilitation and treatment of prison inmates and parolees. These funds may be used for staffing, contracts, and other services including academic and vocational services, substance abuse treatment, and mental health treatment. SB 81 further defines the purposes for which the \$50 million may be used, including for developing prison-to-employment programs, expanding substance abuse programs for inmates and parolees, developing and implementing a risk and needs assessment for inmates, establishing and funding day treatment services for mentally ill parolees, and expanding educational and vocational programs for inmates.

B. BACKGROUND

A significant body of work has been completed which directs and/or guides the Department's approach to providing inmates with skills likely to result in successful employment in the community and, thereby, also contribute to reducing recidivism. Together these documents have guided the Department in developing this plan-the Inmate Treatment and Prison-to-Employment Plan. The primary foundational documents are:

- *AB 900–The Public Safety and Offender Rehabilitative Services Act of 2007*–The primary focus of AB 900 is rehabilitative programming for inmates and parolees, which is viewed as a key way to reduce recidivism and create safer environments in prisons and in communities when offenders come home. Accordingly, AB 900 charges the Department with responsibility to: (1) address departmental infrastructure problems that, without remedy, will hinder or prevent successful rehabilitative programming; (2) change the approach to rehabilitation and treatment services; and (3) create new, retool, and/or expand existing rehabilitative programming. AB 900 also authorizes significant revenue bond financing for new prison, reentry, and jail beds as a way to reduce overcrowding and enable the delivery of effective rehabilitation programming.
- *The Expert Panel on Adult Offender Recidivism Reduction Programming (Expert Panel)*–The Expert Panel was created by the Department in response to the fiscal year (FY) 2006-07 Budget Act, Item 5225-001-0001-CDCR. The Department contracted with correctional program experts to complete comprehensive evaluations of all adult male and female offender prison and parole programs designed to reduce recidivism and to design a program model for evidence-based offender rehabilitation. The Expert Panel's

Report to the California State Legislature: A Roadmap for Effective Offender Programming in California submitted on June 29, 2007, addresses both topics. The evaluation of existing CDCR rehabilitative programs found that most contained only some elements of evidence-based programming design and often did not serve appropriate participants. The Expert Panel report offers recommendations to guide the Department in creating a model rehabilitation programming system, which is presented as the California Logic Model.

- The Governor's Rehabilitation Strike Team—Two strike teams were created by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in May 2007, one to focus on reducing overcrowding (facilities construction) and the other to focus on increasing rehabilitation and reentry opportunities statewide (rehabilitation). The Rehabilitation Strike Team (Strike Team) was charged with providing rehabilitation program recommendations and a progress roadmap directly to CDCR. The Strike Team issued two status reports (one in August 2007 and one in October 2007) and a final report in December 2007. The Strike Team officially ended its work at the end of December 2007. The Strike Team endorsed the recommendations of the Expert Panel report and used its blueprint of evidence-based practices to assist CDCR in implementing the requirements of AB 900.⁸ In particular, the Strike Team offered detailed guidance to CDCR in developing the Inmate Prison-to-Employment Plan. The second status report, as well as the final report of the Strike Team focused on, among other topics, implementation of a prison-to-employment program designed to facilitate the successful reentry of offenders into communities.

Based upon the direction and guidance offered by these foundational documents, this report captures the Department's final plan for ensuring inmate education, treatment, and rehabilitation programs provide sufficient skills to inmates to increase the likelihood of their successful employment in the community and reduce their chances of returning to prison after release to parole. The Strike Team strongly emphasizes that "Holding a job is one of the best predictors of parole success."⁹ "The empirical and theoretical relationship between crime and unemployment is well documented. Among parolees, higher arrest rates are associated with both higher levels of job instability and lower levels of wages."¹⁰ According to the Legislative Analysts' Office, numerous statistical studies demonstrate that "a parolee who finds and maintains a steady job—and who also has stable housing and avoids substance abuse—is more likely to avoid subsequent offenses and to successfully complete his term on parole."¹¹ Therefore, the link between in-prison rehabilitation programs and employment is critically important.

In this document, the Department will describe its approach to making the connection between in-prison inmate treatment and rehabilitation programs and getting and maintaining a job in the community upon release. The report addresses:

- Evaluation of current inmate education, treatment, and rehabilitation programs.
- The prison-to-employment program that will link inmates to employment upon release from prison and parole into their community.

⁸ Governor's Rehabilitation Strike Team Status Report dated August 2007.

⁹ Governor's Rehabilitation Strike Team final report, Meeting the Challenges of Rehabilitation in California's Prison and Parole System, dated December 2007 (page 13).

¹⁰ Ibid - references a study by Solomon, Johnson, Travis and McBride 2004 (page 59).

¹¹ Ibid - references the California Legislative Analyst's Office 2007 (page 59).

This report will capture how complimentary activities, some of which are addressed in other required reports to the Legislature, fit within the overall framework and approach to providing rehabilitative programming and treatment services for prison inmates and parolees.

C. EVALUATION OF CURRENT INMATE EDUCATION, TREATMENT, AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

The Expert Panel reviewed existing inmate education, treatment, and rehabilitation programs to determine how they operate in comparison to correctional programs operating in other states. Through this process, the Expert Panel identified eight key evidence-based principles and practices and made recommendations on how these can be made operational through the California Logic Model so CDCR can deliver a core set of effective rehabilitation programs. Within this context a number of factors were found to reduce the effectiveness of the Department's current rehabilitation programming.

1. Risk and Needs Assessment

Assessing offending risk levels and needs was identified as a crucial component of effective programming which allows assignment of offenders to programs that will most benefit them. Offenders with different levels of risk to reoffend also respond differently to rehabilitation programming. Correctional agencies appropriately targeting offenders are more likely to reduce recidivism. The first three evidence-based principles and practices for effective rehabilitation programming are:

- Target Highest Risk Offenders. Provide rehabilitation programming to the highest risk to reoffend prisoners and parolees first. Provide other types of programs to low risk to reoffend prisoners and parolees.
- Assess Offenders' Needs. Assess the criminogenic needs (dynamic risk factors) of offenders using research-based instruments. The goal of programming should be to diminish needs.
- Design Responsivity into Programming. Programming should account for individual offender characteristics that interfere with or facilitate an offender's ability and motivation to learn.

It was found the Department's failure to assign inmates to programs based on individual risk and needs assessments means most offenders were not receiving the rehabilitative programming they need. The practice of assigning inmates to programs on a first come, first serve basis reduces the likelihood of making an appropriate program assignment.

In response the Department adopted use of an automated risk and needs assessment instrument and began implementation at reception centers during FY 2006-07. The instrument used is the Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS). The COMPAS assessment tool is a research-based risk and needs assessment tool for criminal justice practitioners to assist them in the placement, supervision, and case management of offenders in community and secure setting. The Department adopted a phased implementation plan for completing COMPAS assessments at all 12 reception centers. At present, assessments are completed for some newly received inmates; additional funding proposed in the Governor's Budget for FY 2008-09 will allow expansion to additional inmates at intake.

In addition, based on the COMPAS assessment, additional secondary assessments may be conducted. Moderate to high scores on the COMPAS criminogenic and needs profile would indicate the need to administer a secondary assessment instrument to more fully assess the nature of the risk and needs. For example, educational or vocational deficits may indicate the need to administer the test of adult basic education; comprehensive adult student assessment system; or interest determination, exploration, and assessment system. Similarly, an indication of substance abuse might warrant use of an assessment tool such as the Addiction Severity Index. Inmates with a low risk to recidivate, as revealed through the COMPAS, would not require further assessment, but would receive a life skills case management plan.

The Department is presently working to integrate the COMPAS assessment information into the complex inmate classification and endorsement process. Beginning in February 2008 Classification Staff Representatives in the reception centers began to use inmate COMPAS profiles as part of the general population prison placement decision making process. This is a critical link toward the assignment of inmates to appropriate programs based on individual risk and needs assessments. The use of risk and needs assessment information in assignment of inmates to programming will be tested through the "proof project" set to begin July 1, 2008.

2. Case Planning

The Expert Panel identified the case management planning process as an important evidence-based practice that is an integral step in matching the right offender to the right program in the right order. An integrated case management plan for each offender is the foundation for providing services that address criminogenic needs. Case management plans are based upon the assessment of offender risk, needs, and responsivity; identifying the types and levels of programs and services to address these needs; and enabling active tracking of offender progress towards achieving rehabilitation programming objectives. The case management plan also ensures continuity of rehabilitation programs and services between the prison, parole system, and other community-based providers. The fourth evidence-based principle and practice for effective rehabilitation programming is:

- Develop Behavior Management Plans. Individual programming should occur in the context of a larger behavior management plan developed for each offender, which will include the priority and sequence of treatment programs, the means for measuring treatment gains, and the goals for a crime-free lifestyle.

It was found the Department does not have a case plan for each of its offenders, which means there is not a planned approach to providing programs to meet offender risks and needs. Further, it was found the lack of an adequate technology infrastructure will hamper the ability to establish an automated case plan; an automated case plan is critically important to allow sharing information between institutions and divisions. Additional guidance relative to development of a case plan was provided by the Strike Team's final report, which refers to the case plan as the Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Plan. The Strike Team indicates the lack of a comprehensive case management system is one of the major reasons CDCR is not getting the right inmates to the right programs at the right time.

In response the Department is using the guidance from the Strike Team report to develop a case management planning process and case plan. Assessment information, inmate interviews, and other available information will be used to create case management plans. The contents of the case plan are under development and will incorporate information already collected during the inmate intake process as well as additional information needed for effective

case planning and prison/programming assignment. In addition, CDCR has explored, and at this time is planning to use on at least an interim basis, the functionality available within the COMPAS instrument for automated case management planning. The COMPAS instrument contains the added functionality for an offender case management plan, parole agent case management plan, case notes, and resource database (currently housing community resources only). It is expected a final determination of feasibility will occur shortly. CDCR anticipates, beginning in June 2008, it will start using completed assessments to create case management plans.

3. Deliver Rehabilitative Programming

The Expert Panel identified six major offender programming areas necessary to address the criminogenic needs of adult offenders. The six programming areas are: (a) academic, vocational, and financial; (b) alcohol and other drugs; (c) aggression, hostility, anger, and violence; (d) criminal thinking, behaviors, and associations; (e) family, marital, and relationships; and (f) sex offending. The Expert Panel further indicated the effectiveness of rehabilitation services depends on the quality, quantity, and content of the programs; programs focused on the six major offender programming areas, when implemented appropriately, reduce recidivism. The fifth and sixth evidence-based principles and practices for effective rehabilitation programming are:

- Deliver Treatment Program Using Cognitive-Based Strategies. Research has consistently determined cognitive-behavioral treatments are more effective than any other form of correctional intervention because these treatment types address criminal thinking and behaviors in offenders. The therapeutic community treatment model, which uses cognitive-based treatment strategies, is a highly effective method for treating alcohol and other drug dependencies.
- Motivate and Shape Offender Behaviors. Programming should include structure or capacity for rewarding positive behavior in addition to punishing negative behavior.

It was found the Department offers a number of programs in the first two areas (i.e., academic and vocational and substance abuse), but offers few programs in the other four, including no sex offending rehabilitation programs. A full menu of rehabilitation programs targeted to reducing recidivism is not currently available. Additionally, it was suggested each of the programs offered should be standardized so the content and delivery are consistent and effective. Program fidelity (i.e., ensuring programs are offered in a manner consistent with design principles and practices) is critically important in achieving successful outcomes.

In response the Department has initiated actions to increase both the effectiveness and utilization of existing programs and acquire at least one program in each of the six core areas identified by the Expert Panel. The CDCR has selected the following additional core programs for initial inclusion in the “proof project” sites:¹²

¹² As recommended by the Expert Panel and Strike Team, CDCR will implement and test the full scope of the new rehabilitative model (i.e., the California Logic Model) through a “proof project” prior to roll-out to all institutions. The “proof project” will involve offenders from intake through prison, community reentry, and parolee discharge; it will showcase the pathway of rehabilitative programming for a group of inmates. The “proof project” sites are: Deuel Vocational Institution (reception center), California State Prison, Solano (prison), Northern California Reentry Facility (reentry facility serving San Joaquin, Calaveras, and Amador Counties); and Parole Region I (serving parolees from the same three counties).

- Academic, Vocational, and Financial: The education and vocational programs currently operated by CDCR were found to include the most commonly used evidence-based programs. The Department will focus on effective implementation practices and increasing inmate participation.

Financial: In addition, the Department will address financial issues through Money Smart—a free, money management curriculum from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

- Alcohol and Other Drugs: The Department's substance abuse program ranked second highest among programs reviewed by the Expert Panel and its highest score for research-based findings.¹³ Therefore, the current program will be continued and modified as appropriate to increase effectiveness.
- Aggression, Hostility, Anger, and Violence: The curriculum Control Anger and Learning to Manage (CALM) will be used initially. This program teaches male participants to understand emotions in order to prevent and control problematic behaviors. Key components of CALM include activities such as modeling, role-play, and teamwork.
- Criminal Thinking, Behaviors, and Associations: The curriculum Thinking for a Change, a cognitive-behavioral curriculum developed through the National Institute of Corrections will be used initially. The program includes therapeutic techniques such as structured learning experiences, interpreting social cues, and monitoring one's own thought processes.
- Family, Marital, and Relationships: Upon further review, CDCR is reconsidering the initial curriculum selections in this area. Initially it was thought the Getting it Right curriculum (along with Passport, a transitional pocket document) could be customized to meet the needs of California's offender population. This option and other curriculum are now under review.
- Sex Offending: The Prison Sex Offender Treatment: Recommendations for Program Implementation prepared on behalf of CDCR by Peggy Heil and Kim English, and the recommendations contained in the recently released report by the Sex Offender Management Board are under consideration. This area is still under review.

The Department will also address a major potential pitfall in the operation of evidence-based rehabilitative programs in prison environments by means of a program review component that will continuously monitor these core programs for fidelity to their design models.

4. Preparation for Reentry and Community Reintegration

The Expert Panel identified the need for focused attention on offender reentry and successful reintegration of offenders into their home communities. The seventh evidence-based principle and practice for effective rehabilitation programming is:

- Engender the Community as a Protective Factor Against Recidivism and Use the Community to Support Offender Reentry and Reintegration. Programming should involve the offender's immediate family members and the social service agencies in the

¹³ Report to the California State Legislature: A Roadmap for Effective Offender Programming in California (pages 61-62).

community to which the offender will be returning. The State should empower the community—families, neighborhoods, religious and cultural institutions, businesses—to reduce crime through deliberate efforts that assist offenders under correctional control and provide support to reduce criminal behavior.

The Department has begun to focus on offender reentry issues and initiatives, there is a need to significantly expand efforts in this area. The Expert Panel made a number of recommendations relative to CDCR strengthening its formal partnerships with community stakeholders, developing formal reentry plans for offenders with moderate to high risk to reoffend, and enhancing transition services and supports in the community, including family reintegration skills.

In response the Department has initiated action to implement new secure community reentry facilities (SCRF) (pursuant to AB 900), as well as develop a statewide structure to begin to establish formal partnerships with local communities for offender reentry and reintegration. The SCRF is a new business model for California, geared to provide an additional rehabilitative programming option located within an inmate's home community. The SCRF is a model in which smaller facilities located in or near an offender's home community provide rehabilitative programming to prepare him or her for release and community reentry and reintegration.

The Department is also changing the manner in which it looks at the programming provided to its offenders in the community. In the past, programs were viewed in the context of their funding source, such as those provided through the recidivism reduction strategies, or by various organizational entities. This has resulted in a patchwork of services around the State that often do not have the capacity to meet the needs of offenders returning to their home communities. A comprehensive approach to determine and prioritize the purchase of community services using evidence-based practices and/or highest service need to reduce recidivism is planned.¹⁴ In addition, CDCR is establishing a statewide regional structure with lead staff in each region to begin the process of establishing formal reentry plans and partnerships with local communities.

5. Measure Progress and Outcomes (Follow-Up)

The Expert Panel identified the importance of measuring progress and tracking outcomes relative to individual offenders as well as the results achieved by rehabilitative programs. A key focus should be on tracking offenders and collecting outcome data at set intervals following discharge, particularly to track recidivism rates. The eighth evidence-based principle and practice for effective rehabilitation programming is:

- Identify Outcomes and Measure Progress. All programs should have identified outcomes and integrated methods for measuring progress toward objectives. The system should use performance measures to evaluate progress and inform improvements.

It was found the Department does not always measure the quality or effectiveness of its adult offender programs. Moreover, because CDCR does not assess risks and needs for all incoming prisoners or exiting parolees, it cannot measure program effectiveness in reducing recidivism. The Panel suggests this requires the collection of programming data from every program delivered and every offender assigned to programming.

¹⁴ Refer to the CDCR legislative report, Obtaining Additional Treatment and Rehabilitation Services submitted via letter dated March 11, 2008 for more information.

In response the Department continues to substantially enhance its research and program fidelity abilities. The Governor's Budget for FY 2008-09 proposes to expand the capacity of the Office of Research and establish the Office of Program and Policy Development, which includes a Program Fidelity Section. Together these offices will conduct outcome evaluations of offenders and programs and ensure that programs, once implemented, are operating consistent with the intended design. Programs found not to be meeting evidence-based principles and practices and/or operating per design will be modified or discontinued.

D. PRISON-TO-EMPLOYMENT—THE NEW START PROGRAM

Significant efforts are underway to change the way in which CDCR operates custody and community programs so they are consistent with evidence-based principles and practices for effective rehabilitation programming. A major part of this effort is to ensure current inmate education, treatment, and rehabilitation programs provide sufficient skills to inmates to increase the likelihood of their successful employment in the community, and reduce their chances of returning to prison after release to parole. This means rehabilitation programming must directly relate to enabling an offender to get and keep a job upon release. While CDCR has had some successful employment-related outcomes, there is no comprehensive and focused employment program. Existing effort requires retooling to make the direct connection of offenders to employment upon release from prison a reality.

1. Nature of the Problem

Currently, parolees experience a very high rate of unemployment; estimates range from 60 percent to 80 percent parolee unemployment one-year after release from prison.¹⁵ "Over 95 percent of California prisoners will eventually be released and they urgently need a legitimate means of support. Holding a job remains one of the best predictors of parole success."¹⁶ According to the Strike Team,

Employment not only correlates with successful reentry outcomes, it causally contributes to those outcomes. There is support for the proposition that legal income is a direct substitute for funds that would be derived from illegal sources. Beyond fulfilling the need for money, a steady job signals that an individual has embraced a pro-social lifestyle. Moreover, the connections people make at work can serve as social controls that prevent criminal behavior. Accepting these theoretical underpinnings of the relationship between criminality and employment, it is clear that if ex-offenders leave prison with enhanced skills and legitimate job prospects, the prospect for positive outcomes could be improved.¹⁷

The Department currently offers a range of employment-related programs and activities both in-prison and in the community for parolees. Some of these seem to operate with success; however, many have not been evaluated. Moreover, the limited capacity of these programs means many offenders who could benefit from participation are not able to participate. This is

¹⁵ Governor's Rehabilitation Strike Team final report, Meeting the Challenges of Rehabilitation in California's Prison and Parole System, dated December 2007 (page 59).

¹⁶ Ibid - page 13.

¹⁷ Ibid- page 59.

true for both in-prison and in-community programs offered by CDCR. The Strike Team found that for the 134,000 prisoners who left California prisons in 2006:¹⁸

- Only 10 percent had participated in *any* vocational education.
- An additional 18 percent participated in more traditional classroom academic education.
- Most inmates did not participate in more than one program while in prison, despite the fact prisoners have multiple needs.
- Fifty percent of all existing inmates did not participate in any rehabilitation or work program nor did they have a work assignment during their prison terms (which now averages two years).

The Strike Team found a similar situation for parolees in the community with only 10 percent of parolees participating in education or vocational programs while on parole.¹⁹ The Strike Team noted, for example, only about 2 percent of parolees participated in the CDCR Computerized Literacy Learning Centers, despite estimates which suggest 20 percent of prisoners are completely illiterate and 40 percent are functionally illiterate.

Retooling the Department's current approach to prison-to-employment requires several important areas be addressed, including the lack of: (1) program capacity; (2) a direct connection to jobs in the community; (3) a single comprehensive approach to offender employment programs; and, (4) individual and program outcome evaluations. The Department's prison-to-employment plan directly addresses these shortcomings.

2. Existing Employment-Related Programs and Activities

CDCR currently offers a range of employment-related programs and activities both in-prison and in the community for parolees. A brief recap of these programs is important to establishing a shared understanding of the current baseline. These programs and activities are offered in prison, in the community, and some have an in-prison and community component or connection.

a. In-Prison Programs and Activities

The in-prison, employment-related programs and activities range from traditional academic education, vocational education, and work experiences. A brief description of each follows:

- Academic education—Academic courses constitute a competency-based classroom education program for inmates without a high school diploma. Courses are divided into: Adult Basic Education; English as a Second Language; and High School/General Educational Development (GED). Instruction is provided by the CDCR Office of Correctional Education. The goal of the program is to provide inmates with the academic skills to function in society. Academic courses are offered at all 33 adult institutions. There are approximately 430 classrooms, with 27 students per classroom.

In addition, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act program funded by the United States Department of Education supplements State-funded education programs

¹⁸ Governor's Rehabilitation Strike Team final report, Meeting the Challenges of Rehabilitation in California's Prison and Parole System, dated December 2007 (page 13).

¹⁹ Ibid - (page 13).

for students under 21 years of age. The program provides individualized remedial instruction in a small class setting. This program is offered at ten adult correctional institutions.

o Vocational/employment programs—There are five programs of this type, as follows:

- Vocational education: A wide array of vocational education programs are provided throughout the institutions (e.g., welding, auto body repair, office technologies, and carpentry). The goals of vocational education programs are to provide: (1) industry-level certifications to vocational students prior to release; (2) inmates with a marketable skill at a living wage; and (3) quality standardized education at an affordable cost within CDCR. At least one vocational class is offered in all but three adult institutions. There are approximately 400 vocational classes, typically with 27 students per class.
- Inmate Employability Program (IEP): This is a self-study program that assists inmates who have worked for the California Prison Industry Authority (PIA) to gain vocational certification. The goals for PIA's reentry-oriented activities are to train inmates for productive employment upon their release and to help them address any barriers they may have to obtaining and maintaining employment. The IEP operates in adult institutions statewide.
- Incarcerated Youthful Offenders (IYOP) Program: The IYOP is a United States Department of Education administered program run by the CDCR Office of Correctional Education that provides post-secondary vocational education certification to CDCR inmates 25 years of age or younger. The goals of the program are to: (1) facilitate the transition from prison to work/community, utilizing job placement as the basis for assistance; (2) increase the ability of young adult offenders to compete in the job and career market; and (3) maximize the use of incarceration idle time to enhance the opportunities for life changes. The IYOP operates in 12 prisons, and the post-release services are available to participants returning to all California counties. The number of participants per site varies from 20 to 90, but the ideal number is 45 per site, for a total of 540 statewide.
- Offender Employment Continuum (OEC): The OEC is an employment readiness program for inmates who have 120 days or less remaining before they are paroled. In its first year, OEC provided both pre-release services and post-release services through job specialists. The job specialist positions were discontinued after the first year due to a program budget reduction. OEC is a component of the Preventing Parolee Crime Program. The goals of the program are to provide basic life skills, employability training, and facilitate participant preparedness for future job placement and long-term gainful employment. The program operates at five institutions (Avenal State Prison; Central California Women's Facility; Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility; California State Prison, Solano; and Valley State Prison for Women). The total capacity is 750 inmates.
- Carpentry Pre-Apprenticeship Program: This program is a partnership between the PIA and the Carpenter's Union. Participants receive both academic instruction to facilitate their obtaining a GED and vocational instruction in carpentry. Inmates who complete the program will receive union preapprenticeship status, which facilitates post-release employment as carpenters. The goals of the program are to: (1) instruct

inmates in the fundamentals of carpentry and (2) prepare inmates for a pre-apprenticeship program in carpentry. The program operates at two locations, serving males at Folsom State Prison (100 inmates) and females at California Institution for Women (25 inmates).

- Inmate support services assignments: Inmate support services assignments enable more efficient operation of prisons through use of inmate labor. Functions performed by inmates include porter, food server, and yard crew worker.
- PIA vocational programs: PIA is an inmate work program that provides job opportunities for inmates. PIA's primary function is to rehabilitate inmates and facilitate their successful reentry into society by providing work assignments for approximately 5,900 inmates. PIA operates over 60 service, manufacturing, and agricultural industries at 22 prisons. These industries produce a variety of goods and services including flags, coffee, shoes, printing services, signs, binders, eye wear, gloves, office furniture, license plates, clothing, cell equipment, and more. PIA products and services are available to government entities, including federal, State, and local governmental agencies.

b. In-Community Programs and Activities

The in-community employment-related programs and activities offered by CDCR to parolees focus primarily on remedial education (such as literacy) to assist parolees in obtaining employment. Parolees voluntarily participate in these programs and activities. A brief description of each follows:

- Academic education (Computer Literacy Learning Centers [CLLC]). CLLC provides a classroom with a number of computers, which parolees can use to improve their reading and math skills at their own pace through a computer-based curriculum. CLLC is a component program of the Preventing Parolee Crime Program and is administered statewide through the Adult Correctional Education Department of the Contra Costa County Office of Education's Student Programs and Services Division. The goal of the program is to increase the functional literacy and employment skills of participating parolees by increasing their reading/math skills a minimum of 2 grade levels in 40 hours of instruction. CLLC operates in 21 parole offices and residential multi-service centers statewide. Total statewide capacity is 323, with the student capacity at individual sites ranging from 12 to 17.
- Vocational/employment programs. There are four programs of this type, as follows:
 - California Employment Development Department (EDD) Program: The EDD program offers preemployment services, job search preparation, job placement, and job retention assistance to parolees through a CDCR interagency agreement with EDD to base EDD job specialists in parole offices. The goal of the program is to assist adult parolees with obtaining gainful employment. The EDD program is offered at parole offices statewide using approximately 17 job specialists.
 - Parole Employment Program (PEP): The PEP is administered by community-based contractors, who provide employment services to parolees. The goal of the program is to assist parolees in gaining employment. The PEP program operates in nine parole complexes: Fresno, Bakersfield, San Francisco, Alameda, Santa Clara,

Los Angeles, Inglewood, Riverside, and San Diego. The program capacity is approximately 240 parolees.

- Community Reentry Partnerships (CRP): The CRP provides a transitional coordinator and services to work with parolees returning to San Diego County who have worked for PIA or are served by the Substance Abuse Service Coordinating Agency. The individual attention provided by the transitional coordinators assist parolees in meeting the goals of their reentry plan. The goals of the program are to: (1) promote a stable and productive transition from prison to community; (2) draw on existing community- and faith-based resources to deliver a comprehensive individualized reentry plan; and (3) provide assistance in meeting the points of the reentry plan. The program is located in San Diego County and serves approximately 200 parolees (maximum caseload of 50 for 4 transitional coordinators).
- Other Programs. Other programs are also offered by the CDCR Division of Parole Operations, some of which include vocational and employment-related services, including the parolee job program and parolee service centers. In addition, the CDCR Division of Adult Programs offers programs for female offenders such as the Female Offender Treatment and Employment Program.

Together these programs offer a variety of vocational and employment-related services; however, they do not constitute an integrated and comprehensive approach to assisting offenders in obtaining and retaining a job upon their return to the community.

3. Prison-to-Employment Plan

The Department, in collaboration with the Strike Team, has created a prison-to-employment program that will focus the needed attention on enabling offenders to secure and retain employment when they leave prison. CDCR will create a “prison-to-employment continuum” to directly link behavioral, academic, and vocational education to job skills and available job opportunities in the community. There are several components of this plan as follows.

a. Establish Infrastructure to Support Prison-to-Employment Program

The Department has or soon will establish the infrastructure necessary to support an effective prison-to-employment program. The infrastructure changes will create a single, comprehensive offender employment program that will integrate and coordinate the dozens of offender employment programs currently operated or funded by CDCR. This will also allow CDCR to effectively monitor the costs and benefits of vocational program participation. The infrastructure components are:

(1) Establish a Director of Employment

The Department is establishing and will recruit a CDCR Director of Employment to establish and oversee the prison-to-employment program. The Director will ensure a comprehensive and integrated approach to offender employment is in place statewide. The key responsibilities of this position will include to:

- Establish and maintain the infrastructure to support the prison-to-employment program, the New Start program.
- Complete the design and implement the New Start program.

- Collect and use labor market data to inform the array of vocational programs offered by CDCR in-prison and in the community.
- Assist in expanding and upgrading the quality of vocational programs offered by CDCR in prison and in the community.
- Assure continuity between CDCR prison and parole employment programs.
- Ensure the prison-to-employment program is supported by appropriate policies, procedures, and practices.
- Collaborate with CDCR Office of Research and Office of Policy and Program Development to monitor and evaluate employment program inputs and outputs.

The Department is soliciting input on the individual knowledge, skills, and abilities requirements for this position. It is anticipated the recruitment process for this position will be completed within 60 days. In the meantime, CDCR appointed an interim Director of Employment who has been acting in this position since December 2007.

(2) Establish an Employment Program Office

The Department is establishing a prison-to-employment program function within Adult Programs (Division of Education, Vocations, and Offender Programs). The Governor's Budget includes \$301,000 and 6 ongoing positions in FY 2007-08 and \$681,000 in FY 2008-09 to establish this program and office. Steps have been taken to establish these positions and recruitment is expected to begin shortly. The establishment of this office will allow dedicated attention to offender employment issues and completion of the responsibilities listed above for the Director of Employment. In the meantime, CDCR has used other personnel resources to "kick off" the prison-to-employment program; these resources include use of a retired annuitant, contracted consultant, the time and efforts of existing staff, and support and assistance provided by the Executive Director of the California Workforce Investment Board (CWIB).

(3) Establish an Agreement between the CDCR Secretary and Labor and Workforce Development Secretary

The Secretary of CDCR and the Secretary of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency will enter into an agreement to cooperate to ensure the two agencies work together to assist offenders returning to local communities to obtain and retain employment and, thereby, promote increased public safety. The shared vision, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the two agencies, will be captured in the agreement, which will set the tone for collaborating to ensure the success of the prison-to-employment program. A draft document has been prepared for the consideration of the agency secretaries and is expected to be executed shortly.

(4) Establish a Formal Partnership between CDCR and CWIB

CDCR and CWIB have already established a solid working relationship which soon will be formalized through an interagency agreement (IA). The CWIB Executive Director participated as a member of the Strike Team's prison-to-employment work group and has provided significant support and guidance. The Strike Team, in its final report, strongly recommends this formal partnership between the two agencies be established. The CWIB oversees 49 local workforce investment boards and 200 one-stop centers around the State that are authorized by federal law to provide employment assistance to all Californians, including parolees. This

partnership would ensure the prison-to-employment program builds upon a well-established infrastructure to support the employment of parolees in their local communities.

The CDCR and CWIB are presently developing an IA to delineate the roles and responsibilities of each party, specify shared responsibilities for phased implementation of the New Start program (described below), and determine costs and funding options to support the work of the local workforce investment boards. Under consideration is redirection of existing CDCR employment monies to support staff located in local workforce investment boards and/or at prisons to implement this integrated, comprehensive approach to offender employment. Final funding determination will occur shortly, with any funding arrangements incorporated within the proposed IA. A draft IA has been prepared and is in the review process; execution of the IA is expected within the next 60 days.

(5) Create a Prison-to Employment Steering Committee

The Department will establish a Prison-to-Employment Steering Committee that will advise CDCR on its prison-to-employment program. The concept is to create an association of nonprofit employment groups who work with offenders, other public and private employers, and formerly incarcerated individuals who face/faced the challenges of finding employment upon release from prison. The goal is to establish a structured working relationship with individuals and entities to advise CDCR on proposed directions, opportunities, and barriers or pitfalls. The Steering Committee would also assist CDCR in communicating with others about the Department's prison-to-employment program and the benefits to be achieved by individual participants and communities in terms of public safety. The Department is considering whether this should be a new committee or an existing committee(s) that do or can provide this focus (e.g., the statewide Reentry Advisory Committee).

b. Continue to Hold Community Stakeholder (Employer) Forums

The CDCR and CWIB will continue to hold community stakeholder forums to help identify employers around the State who are willing to hire parolees. Two forums have been held to date—an initial employer forum in San Bernardino County in September 2007 and a second forum in Sacramento County in March 2008. The purpose of the forums is to: (1) help identify employers willing to hire parolees; (2) create a statewide list of employers willing to hire parolees; and (3) identify barriers or disincentives to employment and/or employment incentives. Other states have successfully used this approach to establish lists of employer willing to hire ex-offenders (e.g., Texas has a list of 12,000 employers). Identified barriers and suggested incentives will be captured, logged, evaluated, and acted upon as appropriate.

The CDCR and CWIB will continue to plan and hold these forums. A priority for future forums will be those locales where reentry facilities are likely to be sited.

c. Collect, Analyze, and Use Job Market Data

The Department will collect, analyze, and use on an ongoing basis job market data to determine the types of jobs that will actually be available in each county (projected to ten years). This information is available from the EDD and shows the projected number of job openings, median hourly wage, and education and training levels required. This data will be used to validate and/or retool existing vocational programs and in planning new vocational programs to ensure they meet future labor market needs. CDCR will also collect data on inmate cohorts exiting the

prison system during the next two years to determine actions that can be immediately taken to ensure current in-prison training is translated to relevant jobs upon reentry.

d. Establish a Model Program to Place Parolees in Jobs–New Start Program

Departmental representatives participated with the Strike Team in reviewing successful prison-to-employment models from around the nation to assist the Department in moving forward in this area. It was found most prison-to-employment programs share generally similar design elements that include: in-prison vocational training, in-prison employment skills development, post-prison employment services, and performance outcome measurement. Based on this review, the Department will initiate a new employment program called New Start that will provide a uniform integrated ex-offender employment training and placement system. The New Start program is modeled after successful programs in other states, particularly the successful employment reentry program operating in Texas-Project RIO (Re-Integration of Offenders).

Project RIO has been in operation since 1993, although it initially began as a two-city pilot program in 1985. Project documentation shows that “Project RIO clients appear to be much more likely to get jobs than ex-offenders who do not participate in the program.”²⁰ In addition, Project RIO has some striking similarities to California in terms of size, the complexities of intra-agency collaboration and communication (institutions, parole and programs), and the inter-agency collaboration between the correctional agency and the Texas Workforce Commission (the State’s employment agency) to build upon the employment services infrastructure statewide. Project RIO provides a model CDCR can follow; however, the approach may be augmented and/or adjusted to best meet the needs of California.

The New Start program will work collaboratively with the CWIB and its existing employment infrastructure. The CWIB has 49 local workforce investment boards and 200 one-stop centers around the State responsible for providing employment services. The New Start program will incorporate the experience and “lessons learned” from the Project RIO model as well as the experiences of other states and employment specialists to address the needs of this State. There will be four components of the New Start program:

- In-Prison Vocational Training–Based on assessment of each offenders’ risk and needs, the case management plan will address employability and provide academic, vocational, and other skills needed for an offender to obtain and retain employment. The vocational training provided will be matched to employment opportunities available within the community to which the offender will return.
- In-Prison Employment Skills and Documentation Development–The program will work with offenders while still in prison to develop job readiness skills (e.g., job interviewing, resume preparation, etc.) needed to find and keep employment. For many offenders, particularly those who have been in prison for a longer period of time, employment skills development will also be addressed (e.g., basic life skills such as meal preparation, bill paying, personal health, and hygiene). In addition, the program will assist offenders in getting an early start on securing employment by gathering documentation necessary to secure employment (e.g., academic and vocational certificates, Social Security card, a California Driver License or California Identification Card, and for males 26 or

²⁰ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Program Focus document on Texas’ Project RIO (page 14).

younger-proof of registration with the Selective Service System, Department of Homeland Security Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification, etc.).

- Post-Prison Employment Services—The primary mission is to place offenders in jobs after release from prison. The partnership between CDCR and CWIB will be the vehicle through which offenders will be referred to post-prison employment services. These services may include job preparation, job search activities (typically an independent job search using employment services resources such as computers, job listings, and telephones), and job placement services (employment specialists match an offender with specific job openings). Case management follow along services will also be provided. In addition, CDCR will establish mechanisms and protocols for managing other parolee needs that may impact employment (e.g., health, housing, food, and clothing).
- Monitoring and Evaluation of Employment Inputs and Outputs—The CDCR and CWIB will develop a systematic approach to oversight and evaluation of performance for the New Start program. It is anticipated, at a minimum, data on offenders referred for services, receiving services (by service type), and obtaining and retaining employment will be collected. Data also will be collected on each aspect of employment program operations by prison, local workforce investment board, and one-stop center. Solid performance evaluation is essential.

Within each of the four components of the New Start program there are several activities and tasks that must be completed in the near-term to retool the Department's current approach to prison-to-employment. These actions are responsive to the shortcomings identified by the Expert Panel and Strike Team reports which include the lack of: program capacity; a direct connection to jobs in the community, a single comprehensive approach to offender employment programs, and individual and program outcome evaluations.

(1) In-Prison Vocational Training

The Department will reassess current in-prison vocational training programs and work opportunities to ensure consistency with labor market data and the California Logic Model, (i.e., getting the right inmate to the right program at the right time). Several activities are underway or planned:

- Case Management Planning and Assignment—The Department will ensure the case management plan design adequately addresses employability and is directed to the offender obtaining employment upon community reentry. Inmate assignment to vocational training and job opportunities will also be reassessed to ensure the assignment of appropriate inmates are made.
- Fully Utilize Existing and Increase Capacity of CDCR Vocational Programs—The Department has initiated a separate effort referred to as Track 1 to increase utilization of existing academic and vocational programs in prisons.²¹ Part of this effort includes review of existing programs to ensure that they are efficacious and operate in accordance with evidence-based principles and practices. This effort will also increase the availability of vocational programming through redirection of existing resources and/or new resources (requires future budgetary action).

²¹ Refer to the CDCR legislative report, Obtaining Additional Treatment and Rehabilitation Services submitted via letter dated March 11, 2008, for more information of Track 1 implementation activities.

- Refocus Existing CDCR Vocational Programs and Opportunities to Match Labor Market Data–The Department will refocus existing CDCR vocational programs and opportunities to match labor market projections and offender risks and needs. The vocational training provided will be matched to employment opportunities available within the community to which the offender will return. Existing programs will be continued, modified, discontinued, and/or new employment training and work opportunities established within prison to match future job availability in the community.
- Reassess Work Opportunities through PIA and Support Service Assignments–The Department will reassess the manner in which inmates are assigned to training and work opportunities provided by PIA as well as inmate support services assignments. The PIA provides important vocational training and work opportunities for inmates; these opportunities must fully support and be integrated within the prison-to-employment program. In addition, inmate support services assignments will be reviewed and, to the extent possible, aligned with nationally recognized job classifications (North American Industrial Classification System) and retooled and structured to provide marketable work experience. Skills learned will be recorded in a manner that will “crosswalk” to the national classification system to aid in employability.

(2) In-Prison Employment Skills and Documentation Development

CDCR and CWIB are considering ways in which to effectively work with offenders while still in prison to develop job readiness skills and the documentation needed to secure employment. Several activities are underway or planned:

- Establish Mechanisms to Inform and Communicate with Inmates about New Start–The Department will establish mechanisms to formally communicate with inmates about the New Start program. Interested inmates will formally enroll in New Start while still in prison.
- Provision of Job Readiness Skills–The Department is considering various means through which to provide job readiness skills, such as job interviewing and resume preparation, which are needed to find and keep employment. Some options to consider are integrating these skills within a life skills track and/or contracting for these services through local workforce investment boards or other employment specialists.
- Provision of Life Readiness Skills–The Department is considering options to address the need to provide additional life readiness skills for many inmates, particularly those who have been in prison for a longer period of time. Life readiness skills training will address basic life skills such as meal preparation, bill paying, personal health, and hygiene. The Department is reviewing employability and life skill materials from other states. The Project RIO series of seven employability and life skills workbooks, called PROD (Project RIO Occupational Direction) is of particular interest. In addition, the Project RIO life skills program called Changes is also under review.²² Again, some options to

²² The Project RIO Changes Program is a 90–120-hour, 65-day life skills program offered to RIO participants who are within six months of release. The program consists of six modules that address: self-concept (including anger management), family relationships (including parenting responsibilities and techniques), civic and legal responsibilities (including paying taxes), victim awareness (including domestic violence), personal health and hygiene (including signs of substance abuse), and job preparation (including job search and interviewing skills). Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Program Focus document on Texas' Project RIO.

consider are integrating these skills within a life skills track and/or contracting for these services through community organizations.

- Employment Documentation Preparation—There is a significant need to collect and assemble all necessary employment documentation prior to an offender's release from prison. Getting an early start on securing employment documents is critical to ensure there is no or very limited "down time" between an offender's release from prison and his or her availability for employment. These essential job prerequisite documents include resumes, academic and vocational certificates, licenses, trade union membership, social security card, selective service registration (for males under 26 years of age), etc. These documents are often referred to as an "employment passport."

The Department will also explore the feasibility of electronic transfer of these documents from institutions to the local workforce investment board. Electronic storage of these records in case of loss also will be considered.

A separate but related issue will also be pursued in regard to options for retention of "employment passport" information in the possession of an offender during the intake process at reception centers. Current practice requires such document are typically mailed to an inmate-provided address or destroyed. Often times these are the same documents that must be resecured in order for an inmate to obtain employment. The Department will develop options and guidelines to enable retention of inmate identification documents that are needed to obtain employment upon release from prison.

- Employer Linkages and Contacts—The Department and CWIB will work to establish employer contacts and employment opportunities for offenders while they are still incarcerated. Options to be considered include expansion of apprenticeship programs, specialized skills training, and other options.

(3) Post-Prison Employment Services

The primary mission of the prison-to-employment program is to place offenders in jobs after release from prison. Linking offenders to employment is a critical part of the process that previously has not been approached in an integrated, comprehensive way. Several activities are underway or planned:

- IA between CDCR and CWIB—The partnership between the CDCR and CWIB will be formalized through an IA that has been drafted and is in the review process. The IA delineates the roles and responsibilities of each party, including the provision of post-prison employment services utilizing the existing local workforce investment boards and one-stop center infrastructure.
- Procedure for Selection and Referral of Offenders—The CDCR and CWIB, in collaboration with local workforce boards, will develop procedures for selection and referral of offenders to post-employment services. The procedures will address the roles and responsibilities of the prisons, parole, and local workforce investment boards and include criteria for referral, referral procedures, documentation of offender referral and employment, and procedural information.

- Case Management Follow-Up—The CDCR will explore options to provide case management follow-up relative to assisting parolees in finding and maintaining employment. This will include review of existing policy, regulations, and the operations manual to determine appropriate roles and responsibilities of CDCR staff and/or contractors. A priority will need to be placed upon assisting offenders in getting and retaining employment.
- Reassess Existing Post-Employment Services and Supports—The Department will inventory and determine how existing CDCR purchased post-employment services fit within the new prison-to-employment programs. CDCR currently purchases employment services in the community from the EDD and other providers operating such programs as the OEC, PEP, and the Parolee Job Program. The Department will determine how these services fit within the envisioned single integrated, comprehensive prison-to-employment program and take steps to appropriately align all such services.
- Related Services and Support—The Department will establish mechanisms and protocols for managing other parolee needs that may impact employment (e.g., health, housing, food, and clothing).

(4) Monitoring and Evaluation of Employment Inputs and Outputs

The CDCR and CWIB will develop a systematic approach to oversight and evaluation of performance for the New Start program. Several activities are underway or soon will be:

- Establish Initial Performance Measures for Phase 1 and 2 Implementation—The Department and CWIB will establish initial performance measures to determine the impact of Phase 1 and 2 program implementation efforts (please see next section for a description of each phase). The CDCR Office of Research will assist in the design and collection of these data. Program operations during Phase 1 and 2 will be limited in scope and only include:
 - Collection and transfer of “employment passport” documents to the local workforce investment board prior to an offender’s release from prison.
 - Putting in place mechanisms to enable the local workforce board to provide offenders with employment skills prior to an offenders release from prison.
 - Local workforce board providing employment services to offenders upon release from prison.
- Establish Performance Outcome Measures—CDCR and CWIB will collect data on:
 - Number of offenders referred for services.
 - Number of offenders receiving services (by service type).
 - Number of offenders obtaining and retaining employment.
 - Reduction in the offender baseline unemployment rate (estimated at between 60 percent and 80 percent).
 - A long and growing list of employers willing to hire ex-offenders.

- Relevant inputs and outputs for each aspect of employment program operations by prison (e.g., alignment with labor market demands), local workforce investment board, and one-stop center.

Together these activities and tasks provide a roadmap to be used by CDCR in establishing the New Start program. Program implementation will be approached in a phased manner.

E. Implement New Start Program

The New Start program will be implemented through a phased approach, using four phases to reach full implementation.

(1) Implement Phase 1–Pilot with Selected Northern and Southern Counties (January 2008 to Ongoing): The first phase of implementation is comprised of local workforce investment boards and one-stop centers coordinating existing employment-related programs in selected counties. This phase will focus on: (a) securing offender employment documents prior to an inmate's release from prison; and (b) the local workforce investment boards using their expertise to work with parolees to find a job. Local workforce investment boards have expertise in placing "hard to employ" individuals and should immediately improve the job prospects for parolees. Phase 1 goals are to develop linkages with existing workforce programs and systems and more effectively link parolees to employment services that currently exist in their home community. Phase 1 is a "stop gap" approach to link parole agents, parolees, and the existing employment and training community, thereby requiring minimal ramp-up time to yield immediate and tangible employment results.

The Strike Team suggested the Phase 1 target population be inmates who show marketability and are more likely to garner the goodwill and interest of the employer communities. This inmate population includes PIA inmate employees, CDCR conservation camp inmate firefighters, and successful graduates of vocational education programs. The Department will review and reaffirm the suggested target population selection in order to ensure employment gains can be achieved through Phase 1. Plans to expand to a broader inmate population will be developed, along with a time frame for this expansion.

The participants who expressed willingness to participate in Phase 1 include six local workforce investment boards and ten counties. They are: San Diego, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, Sacramento, Solano, and the Northern California Consortium of Counties (Colusa, Glenn, Lake, Sutter and Yuba). Lessons learned from this phase will be used to expand the scope of the New Start program as well as the number of counties participating in the program.

(2) Phase 2–Expand to Additional Counties (July 2008 to Ongoing): The second phase of implementation will extend lessons learned from Phase 1 to additional counties and a second wave of local workforce investment boards and one-stop centers. This phase will be used to refine linkages and begin to adopt improved integrated and coordinated processes develop by CDCR and CWIB. This phase may also expand the target population served. This phase is intended to culminate in Phase 3 which will demonstrate the full scope New Start program in the first reentry facility, the Northern California Reentry Facility (NCRF), scheduled to open in December 2008.

The Strike Team recommended participants in Phase 2 are the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, Fresno, San Jose, Orange County, and San Francisco. CDCR and CWIB will confirm participation and/or select alternate participants within the next few weeks. It is

anticipated Phase 2 will result in building capacity at CDCR and the local level, and familiarizing job placement personnel and employers with hiring ex-offenders.

(3) Phase 3—Provide Full-Scope New Start Program in “Proof Project” (December 2008 and Ongoing): The third phase will implement the full-scope New Start program as part of the “proof project” implementation and testing sites. The Strike Team suggested piloting the New Start program as part of the opening of NCRF in Stockton. NCRF is projected to open in December 2008 with an initial 100 male inmates. The Department will include these inmates within the New Start program; however, consideration is being given to including additional inmates at other locations as well.

(4) Phase 4—Implement New Start Program Statewide (July 2009 and Ongoing): The final phase will implement the New Start program statewide, after any necessary modifications are made pursuant to consideration of any practice and/or evaluative findings. The New Start program will be institutionalized as part of normal operations

The Department believes the New Start prison-to-employment program will effectively link inmates to employment upon release from prison and parole into their community. The inmate prison-to-employment component is a critical part of the new rehabilitative program model and, therefore, will be designed and implemented as a separately identified initiative. The prison-to-employment initiative focuses on the necessary steps for an offender to connect to the labor force in order to secure and maintain a job. While other programs within the Department’s overall system reform design will focus on inmate behaviors, knowledge, and skills needed to successfully function in the community, the prison-to-employment initiative focuses on employment and making that direct, but often missing, link to an employer and a job. It has been overwhelmingly demonstrated that obtaining and retaining a job is one of the best predictors of parole success and a key contributor to increasing public safety.